

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USNATO 02790 171034Z
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S E C R E T USNATO 02790

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, NATO, NPG
SUBJECT: USNATO COMMENTS ON DRAFT PERMREPS' REPORT ON NMA
PROPOSALS FOR SHORT-TERM MEASURES TO IMPROVE NATO'S
THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES

REF: (A) USNATO 2575 (DTG 130957Z MAR 78), (B) USNATO 558
(DTG 181702Z JAN 78), (C) SHAPE/ATOMAL/033/78, 6 FEB 78
(DOCUMENT)

1. WE AGREE WITH THE INTENT REFLECTED IN THE DRAFT REPORT
ON NMA PROPOSALS FOR SHORT-TERM MEASURES (REF A) TO KEEP
THE PERMREP REPORT BRIEF AND GENERAL IN NATURE, PARTICULARLY
IN VIEW OF UPCOMING MINISTERIAL CONSIDERATION OF THE RELATED
LONG-TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM FOR TNF MODERNIZATION. WE SEE A NEED,
HOWEVER, FOR SOME EDITORIAL CHANGES TO AVOID REPETITION AND
SMOOTH OUT THE TEXT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN PARA 4, WE WOULD RECOMMEND
DELETING SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO "NOT PRE-EMPTING" MINISTERIAL
DISCUSSIONS, AND INSTEAD
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PAGE 02 USNATO 02790 171034Z

REWORDING THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARA 4 ALONG THE FOLLOWING
LINES: "HOWEVER, SINCE THESE SHORT-TERM PROPOSALS ARE CLOSELY
RELATED TO THE LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT REQUIREMENTS TO BE
CONSIDERED BY MINISTERS, WE ABSTAIN AT THIS STAGE FROM OFFERING
ANY DETAILED COMMENTS."

2. AS WE SUGGESTED IN REF B, WE SEE MERIT IN PROVIDING A

SEPARATE AGENDA ITEM TO FACILITATE MINISTERIAL DISCUSSION OF THE SHORT-TERM TNF IMPROVEMENT MEASURES, SEPARATE FROM THE LONG-TERM MEASURES. THOUGH NATIONS ARE NOT LIKELY TO OFFER POSITIONS ON THE PROPOSALS, IT PROBABLY WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HEAR THEIR PRELIMINARY THINKING. ALSO, IN THOSE INSTANCES WHERE THERE IS NO CONFLICT WITH THE WORK OF THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP, WE BELIEVE SOME OF SACEUR'S SHORT-TERM MEASURES COULD BE ACTED UPON INDEPENDENTLY. FOR EXAMPLE, NUCLEAR-CAPABLE CERTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL WEAPONS SYSTEMS (PARA 118, REF C); TRANSFER OF SOME SYSTEMS FROM THE CENTRAL TO THE SOUTHERN REGION (PARA 122, REF C); STANDARDIZATION OF SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR BOTH US AND NON-US UNITS (PARA 123, REF C); ETC., ARE PROPOSALS THAT COULD, INTER ALIA, BE ACHIEVED AT RELATIVELY LOW COST AND WITH REASONABLE LIKELIHOOD OF ALLIED SUPPORT. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE THE CONCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PERMREPS' REPORT SHOULD LEAVE OPEN THE POSSIBILITY FOR SEPARATE ACTION, AND NOT BE TIED FULLY TO THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP. ADDITIONALLY, WE QUESTION WHETHER NPG MINISTERS WOULD BE READY IN APRIL TO "GIVE GENERAL DIRECTIONS ON THE PRIORITIES FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION" (PARA 6C), IF THAT IS MEANT TO MEAN PRIORITIES AMONG THE SPECIFIC NMA RECOMMENDATIONS. BENNETT

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